HISTORY 303
Worlds of Islam

Course Information

Instructor Information:

Instructor Name: Marwan D. Hanania
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Office Hours: By appointment

Course Description:

Introduces the theology and culture of early Islam. Examines the history of the “rightly guided caliphs” era, the Umayyad and Abbasid periods, the Ottoman dynasty and others. Explores recent regional variations in Islam.

Required texts, course materials:
3. Additional materials will be uploaded on to WebCampus and/or distributed in class.

Silver Core Curriculum Core Objectives

This course meets the Silver Core Curriculum Core Objective 10: Diversity and Equity.

Students will demonstrate an understanding of diversity through courses that focus on topics such as race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, religion, physical ability, language, and/or social class with an emphasis on the analysis of equity. Students will apply and evaluate approaches or modes of inquiry used to analyze diversity and equity and the social barriers to these goals.

This course also meets the Silver Core Curriculum Core Objective 11: Global Contexts.

Students will apply and evaluate modes of academic inquiry, creative expression, or results of research to problems in historical and contemporary global contexts. Students will articulate connections among local, national, and international contexts and evaluate the ways that historical and contemporary global influences affect their current situations.
Student Learning Outcomes:

- SLO 1. Students will be able to analyze, evaluate, and interpret primary sources in written assignments and exams.
- SLO 2. Students will be able to analyze and explain the arguments, main points, and use of evidence in secondary sources in written assignments and exams.
- SLO 3. Students will be able to identify key events, issues, and policies related to the history of Islam in written assignments and exams.
- SLO 4. Students will be able to analyze and explain the regional particularities that distinguish the many diverse Muslim communities of the world in terms of ethnic differences and distinct political and theological ideologies in written assignments and exams (CO 10).
- SLO 5. Students will be able to use models and theories of cultural difference to analyze and explain the principle and goal of equity within Muslim societies in written assignments and exams (CO 10).
- SLO 6. Students will be able to explain and analyze the social and political barriers to achieving equity within Muslim societies in written assignments and exams (CO 10).
- SLO 7. Students will be able to analyze and explain the relationship of Muslim societies to world politics and global developments in written assignments and exams (CO 11).
- SLO 8. Students will be able to analyze and explain the role of key Muslim intellectuals and political leaders in shaping global harmony and conflict in written assignments and exams (CO 11).

Reading Guidelines:

Required readings for each week(s) are to be done before class time. Please note that readings are not intended to substitute for class attendance or material. The readings are there to complement class materials and deepen your knowledge and understanding of the topics and events under discussion.

I will also occasionally be distributing additional in-class readings and handouts. If you miss a session, please e-mail me so that I can make these handouts available to you.

Grading Criteria, Scale, and Standards:

This course has a number of requirements designed to improve your knowledge of the subject matter, as well as enhance your abilities in a number of areas: critical thinking, writing and presentations.

Attendance and Participation: Class attendance and participation is a requirement of the course. You are expected to be present at all class meetings unless you have a legitimate excuse (e.g. a documented medical condition or an unanticipated and serious personal situation). Failure to come to class or to participate in discussion may adversely influence your performance in the course. Conversely, effective class participation may enhance your grade. Please come to class prepared, having read the relevant readings and thought about the weekly topics.

Journal: Students are to produce a bi-weekly journal (i.e. one entry of 1-2 pages every two weeks)
reflecting on one or more (if you wish) of the readings covered during that two week interval. The journals will be collected twice per semester.

Presentations: Each student must deliver two short introductory presentations, each on one of the readings. The dates for each student’s presentations will be decided during the first week of class.

Midterm Exam: The Midterm will assess student your mastery of selected topics and readings. The exam may involve a combination of source work, interpretive questions, and some knowledge-based questions.

Research Paper: Students are required to submit a 10-12 pp. research paper on a topic of their choosing relating to class topics.

Final Exam: The final will assess student your mastery of selected topics and readings. The exam may involve a combination of source work, interpretive questions, and some knowledge-based questions.

Your grade in this course will be determined as follows:

Attendance and Participation 10%
Journal 15% (to be collected twice during the term)
Presentations 15%
Midterm Exam 20%
Research Paper 20%
Final Examination 20%

We will use the following scale:

A: 94-100
A–: 90-93
B+: 87–89%
B: 83–86%
B–: 80–82%
C+: 77–79%
C: 73–76%
C–:70–72%
D+: 67–69%
D: 63–66%
D –: 60–62%
F: less than 60%

Class Policies:

Policies regarding late work and make-up exams: If you cannot make it to class for an exam, or have to submit an assignment late, please let me know ahead of time and we can reschedule or you may be able to take an alternate quiz or exam.

Communication Policy: You may contact me by e-mail or phone. I will try to respond within 24-48 hours. If I do not respond within that time frame, please e-mail me a reminder.

Attendance Policy: Class attendance is an essential requirement of this course. If you are taking the
course for credit and need to miss a class due to a health situation, family emergency or religious observation, please let me know ahead of time. Come to class on time.

**Class Conduct:** This course does not allow texting in class or use of an iPad or laptop or any other such device for anything other than work pertaining to the course. If you are texting, you may be asked to leave the class. I will implement a zero-tolerance policy on side-conversations, i.e. people talking to one another while I am lecturing or while a class discussion is going on.

If I am talking and you cannot hear me, please raise your hand or motion to me. Do not verbally interrupt the lecture or you may be asked to leave.

If a student is making a point via a question or comment, and you wish to respond, do not interrupt the student. Wait until he/she finishes his comment, raise your hand and you will be given the opportunity to share your perspective. All points of view must be expressed in a manner that is respectful to the other students in the course.

**University Policies**

**Statement on Academic Dishonesty:**
Cheating, plagiarism or otherwise obtaining grades under false pretenses constitute academic dishonesty according to the code of this university. Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated and penalties can include filing a final grade of "F"; reducing the student's final course grade one or two full grade points; awarding a failing mark on the coursework in question; or requiring the student to retake or resubmit the coursework. For more details, see the University of Nevada, Reno General Catalog.

**Statement of Disability Services:**
Any student with a disability needing academic adjustments or accommodations is requested to speak with me or the Disability Resource Center (Pennington Achievement Center Suite 230) as soon as possible to arrange for appropriate accommodations.

**Statement on Audio and Video Recording:**
Surreptitious or covert video-taping of class or unauthorized audio recording of class is prohibited by law and by Board of Regents policy. This class may be videotaped or audio recorded only with the written permission of the instructor. In order to accommodate students with disabilities, some students may have been given permission to record class lectures and discussions. Therefore, students should understand that their comments during class may be recorded.

**Statement on Safe Learning and Equal Opportunity:**

The University of Nevada, Reno is committed to providing a safe learning and work environment for all. If you believe you have experienced discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual assault, domestic/dating violence, or stalking, whether on or off campus, or need information related to immigration concerns, please contact the University's Equal Opportunity & Title IX office at 775-784-1547. Resources and interim measures are available to assist you. For more information, please visit the Equal Opportunity and Title IX page.

University of Nevada, Reno
Academic Success Services:

Your student fees cover usage of the Math Center (775) 784-4433, Tutoring Center (775) 784-6801, and University Writing Center (775) 784-6030. These centers support your classroom learning; it is your responsibility to take advantage of their services. Keep in mind that seeking help outside of class is the sign of a responsible and successful student.

Course Calendar and Outline of Topics:

Week 1: Introduction
- Introduction to the Course: Content and Format
- Participant Introductions; Nuts and Bolts
- The Study of Islamic History: Methodology and Representation

Week 2: Pre-Islamic Arabia, Muhammad’s Life and the Early Muslim Community
- Primer on the Islamic World: Its History, Geography and Cultural Diversity
- The Social, Economic, Political and Linguistic Heritage of Pre-Islamic Arabia
- Biography of the Prophet
- Life in Medina and the Teachings of Islam

Assignment: (to be completed prior to the first class meeting of the week):
- Required reading: Aslan, No god but God, pp. 3-106
- Optional supplementary reading: I. Shahid, “Pre-Islamic Arabia” from the Cambridge History of Islam Vol. I. This reading will be uploaded to WebCampus

In class group work (readings are all from the McNeill/Waldman book):
- Reading and discussion of Ibn Ishaq, from Biography of the Messenger of God

Week 3: Muhammad’s Triumphs, the Succession and the Caliphate
- Muhammad’s Military and Political Victories
- Succession to the Prophet and the Emergence of the Caliphal State
- The Caliphate of Abu Bakr and the Conquest of Arabia

Assignment (to be done at home prior to class):
- Required reading: Aslan, No god but God, 107-139
- Optional supplementary reading: M.A. Shaban, Islamic History: A New Interpretation, 16-78

In class group work (readings are all from the McNeill/Waldman book):
- Reading and discussion of selections from the Quran; Baladhuri, from Opening Up the Lands; Tabari, “The Death of Uthman”
Week 4: Further Expansion, Institutionalization and Divisions

- Orderly Rule under Umar
- Unrest During the Caliphate of Uthman and Ali
- The Standardization of the Quran

Assignment: (to be completed prior to the first class meeting of the week):

Required reading: Marshall G.S. Hodgson, *The Classical Age of Islam*, pp. 197-217 (This work constitutes Vol 1 of *The Venture of Islam: Conscience and History in a World Civilization*).

Week 5: The Ummayad Dynasty and the Early Abbasids

- Unity and military power under Muawiyah
- Politics, Economy and Administration in Umayyad Times
- The Defeat of the Umayyads

Assignment (to be done at home prior to class):

- Optional supplementary reading: Aslan, *No God but God*, 140-170

In class group work (readings are all from the McNeill/Waldman book):


Week 6: High Point of Islam: The Abbasids

- The Abbasid Caliphs
- Conflict with Shi’a Muslims
- Islamic Law, Theology, Science and Culture under the Umayyads and Abbasids

Assignment (to be done at home prior to class):


Week 7: Islamic Jurisprudence

- Piety vs Rationalism
- Different Schools
- Personal Piety
- **Models of Equity within Islamic Law**

Assignment (to be done at home prior to class):
• Required reading: Hodgson, *The Classical Age of Islam*, 315-409

**Week 8: Islamic Philosophy and Arabic Literature**

• Falsafah and Kalam
• Poetry, History, Prose

Assignment (to be done at home prior to class):


**Week 8: Multiple Dynasties and the Sufi Orientation in Islam**

Themes:

• The decline of the Abbasids
• The Fatimid and Seljuk Dynasties
• The Sufi Dimension

Assignment (to be done at home prior to class):


In class group work:

Rumi, *Divan-i, Shams-i Tabriz*, Ibn Batuta, from *Travels*

**Week 9: The Ottomans**

• The Rise, Consolidation and Demise of the Ottoman Empire

Assignment:


In class group work:

• Kritovoulus from *History of Mehmed the Conqueror*

**Week 10: The Safavid, Mughal and Songhay Empires**

Assignment:

In class group work:

- Vincent, “An Audience with Abbas”

**Week 11: Modern Islam Case Study I**

- Islam in Iran Today
- **Social Inequality in Iran Today**

Assignment:

- Required reading: Roy Mottahedeh, *The Mantle of the Prophet* (selections)

**Week 12: Modern Islam Case Study II**

- Islam in the Arab countries of the Gulf today
- **Social Inequality in the Gulf Today**

Assignment:

- Required reading: John Olbert Voll, *Islam: Continuity and Change* (selections)

**Week 14: Modern Islam Case Study III**

Islam in Indonesia

Assignment:

- Required Reading: Edward Aspinall, “Indonesia: Redistributing Power”

**Week 15: Gender and Globalization**

- Gender and Islam
- Globalization and Islam

Assignment:

- Required Reading: Peter Mandaville, *Islam and Politics*, ch 8; Deniz Kandiyoti, “Islam and Patriarchy: A Comparative Perspective”